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CIA Was One Of Many Exhibitors At This Year's Expo

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In an effort to dispell the myth of the "James Bond" image and to recruit minorities, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), opted to be one of the many exhibitors at the 1982 Minority Consumer Expo.

The CIA, according to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer Directorate for Administration Calvin Jones, was not made aware of the Expo until this year. Jones, who has been with the agency roughly, "32 years, nine months, 10 days and 14 hours," frequently attends such function in an effort to recruit minorities.

He said that the agency has position vacancies in about 25 areas of specialization. Jones added that these positions range from Computer Specialist, Engineer, Photo Interpreter and Security Officer to Stenographer, Physician and Personnel Officer.

Avon Harding, deputy director of the Office of EEO, stated, "there is a misconception (about the CIA) due to James Bond movies." He added that contrary to the image of CIA agents portrayed in the movies, "we do not have 25 beautiful women waiting for us." Harding also said that members of the CIA do not carry guns and have no law enforcement powers.

Jones stated, "there is no danger," in being a CIA employee. "Our chief function," he said, "is to collect foreign intelligence, analyze it, forward it to the President and to aid in foreign policy decision."

The CIA, in Jones' opinion, "is the best place to work." The agency, he said, "offers careers rather than jobs." Even before the Civil Rights laws of the 1960's were enacted, the CIA, he said, was fair in its hiring practices.

Harding stated that even today the application of any minority rejected for employment must go through the EEO office. He added, "the CIA is not for all minorities but we want them to know that the option is there. They do not have to be proficient with a gun or be able to leap tall buildings with a single bound." All persons considered for employment, however, must be physically fit for overseas travel. Although, overseas travel is not required for all positions.

The agency does have some requirements for employment. Jones said, "We look for (applicants with) good communication skills both oral and written. They must be mobile and have a good grade point average."

He explained, "(Applicants) have to have the intelligence to understand what they are getting into." Applicants for most positions must be degreed. And in some areas, such as security, most disciplines, especially in liberal arts, are acceptable.

"Often," Harding explained, "Criminal Justice majors join the agency and become disenchanted because they are interested in law enforcement." We try to match temperament with the employee." He stressed, "We have no law enforcement authority. We have no more reason to carry a gun than any other citizen."

There are advantages to applying to the CIA, Jones said. "We are an accepted agency, similar to, but not like other agencies. (Applicants) don't have to take the PACE (Professional Administrative Career Exam)," which is required by many government agencies. The agency does, however, administer a

"Psychological Applicant Test Battery" to all professionals coming into the agency but it is not a pass or fail test. CIA employees must also take a polygraph test every five years.

Headquartered in the Washington, D.C. area, the agency has offices in most major cities. Jones urged that anyone interested in employment with the CIA contact the local recruiting office or their agency's headquarters.